

REWRITE



The Magazine of Effective Writing

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Twenty-five cents

THE COOPERATIVE WAY CAN HELP YOU

In the day's mail this month we have read a number of news releases that stress cooperation. On another page we have reviewed a book, "Born That Way", by Earl R. Carlson, a doctor who freed himself from the bondage of a weak body through the help of friends and his own indomitable spirit. We are a strong believer in the cooperative way of life and are proud of the way many writers, who have voluntarily joined the WCS Family, have got together to get good things done. We think that in both the writing world and in a much larger world, the great one in which we all live, there are many adventures in cooperation, in practical teamwork waiting to be planned out and carried through to completion. Indeed it is the one sure hope of a lasting & satisfying peace, of any civilization being sustained for more than a few short years.

In a world overshadowed by evil and grasping material in both individuals and national groups, the will to work together, which is seen in many unexpected places, is a very heady tonic. It fills some of us with an unshakable optimism, a strong belief that man is, however slowly, moving forward intellectually and emotionally. A few specific examples will perhaps illustrate what we mean & suggest ways that cooperation can be used to good effect in the writing field.

In my youth I used to hear many stories about scholars such as the beloved George Herbert Palmer and Dean LeBaron R. Briggs loaning expensive, but much needed books to im-poverish or impoverished young men, starting in them the seeds of teamwork and a fine public service. In the book we have referred to above there are many examples of how a poor boy was helped by neighborly friends. A special one was Bud Stillman, who happened, by lucky chance, to be wealthy. But spiritual awareness and desire to serve were also necessary for the completion of a good deed.

In this connection I like the story about a CARE package of farm tools being received in a small town in Greece. Sixty-five families gathered to watch a lucky group of five receive the tools. A woman stroked a mattock fondly and remarked, "This is a second baby to me." A man was overcome at receiving all at the same time a pitchfork, weeding hoe, a mattock and shovel. He said he couldn't use them all in the same day, so he offered immediately to share them with other families in the village. The other four recipients—also pleased and delighted, decided to lend their tools, too. At once a committee began to function to allocate the tools to advantage. The idea spread to three other towns. CARE's chief of mission in Greece, Fred W. Devine, says, "It is difficult to explain the feeling one gets from being able to present a package which will help a whole village over a period of years." It is difficult here in America to realize that hand tools still

mean so much in remote mountain towns across the seas.

The real spiritual bouquet in such a case comes, however, not to the recipients of the emotion Mr. Devine describes, but to the 65 families, who share and build something fine among themselves. They have the end product of their own spiritual awareness and the desire to praise their God "not with their lips but with their lives". And there is nothing sweeter than the heady wine of such a brave adventure. I believe all of us in the Family of WCS writers get such a dividend every time one of us thinks up a way to help some other member of the group. Even those scattered observers, who sit alone in their fire towers and write in reports on the markets within their limited range of vision & experience, must feel themselves a part and active parcel of the one big team that functions not as a single driven unit, but as a group of free men and women cooperatively—benefitting from the shared experiences and detailed observations of all the other members.

More frequently than you would believe, we have heard from members of the WCS Family about the lift they get, when they notice in some magazine or newspaper the by-line of a writer, who has been mentioned in REWRITE. A quiet glow of satisfaction spreads over them as they feel almost as if it were their own by-line. Or as they realize that that special sale is partly due to a tip they or one of their friends sent in. To our mind, that is one of the finest kinds of rewards to be obtained from this writing business. Only a night or two ago I picked up a small Sunday School magazine and saw a serial there. The pay was not great, I knew. But it happened, curiously enough, that I had received letters from the author, who thanked me for the suggestion that he pick up some much needed change that way; and from the editor of the publication, who thanked me for suggestions which included steering this particular author his way. "He's the kind of a writer we can trust to do our kind of story," he added.

Here is another kind of teamwork in which writers can always find a part. A bill has been filed in Congress (S. 1579) by Senators Benton, Hunt, Bricker & Saltonstall to have an 11-man board of distinguished citizens to make continuing studies of the role of radio and TV in the public interest, & to make reports and recommendations to Congress. Why should they all be distinguished citizens? I think one or two small men and women across the field of writing and education ought to be on such a board. Wallace J. Campbell, the director of the Cooperative League's office in Washington, also pointed out the place of small, independent, liberal stations such as WCFM, the coop radio in Washington, in building better overall programs. Cooperation is an exciting adventure, if you really try it.

REWRITE

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<u>MAKE</u>	<u>William E. Harris,</u>	<u>CLEAN UP</u>
<u>THE U.N.</u>	<u>Elva Ray Harris,</u>	<u>AMERICAN</u>
<u>REALLY WORK!</u>	<u>Editors.</u>	<u>POLITICS</u>

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS—we cannot be responsible for changes not received in this office ONE MONTH in advance of taking effect. Whenever possible, please give us exact date of your change. PROMPT RENEWALS bring you more service for your money. They save our time.

URGE YOUR FRIENDS TO SUBSCRIBE. As a matter of policy we accept no advertising. This allows us to report the entire field of writing impartially and for your best interests. Therefore, as you support us, we are able to bring you a better, more dynamic magazine.

"LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!"

The great need of our American democracy, it is clear, is for a practical way for the people to protest. Showing one's pleasure & disapproval by means of letters is like the old image of dropping a grain of sand in the ocean. It takes too many of them to gain an effect. Moreover, the high paid lobby works secretly and to much better effect. Therefore, it is only when public indignation is magnified by a single, sharp issue that the voice of public opinion is really valuable.

A government must have an amount of permanency in order to prove itself and to build up an overall program. But these are times for quicker and more frequent votes of approval or disapproval. The most loyal Democrat, if he is honest, would agree that his party has been too long in office. On the other hand, even if Mr. Truman's leadership were popular and less open to suspicion, there have been many times when a clearcut vote of affirmation or dissatisfaction on the part of public opinion would clarify the minds of those in public office and those serving as loyal opposition. It would enable our leaders also to speak with much more authority to the leaders of other nations. There would surely be fewer misunderstandings.

It has become clear in the last year that even two years is sometimes too long a time between elections. Had there been some concrete way for the American people to express their opinions, they would have done so and very emphatically concerning a number of issues everyone can name. The tax burden, for

one thing, would be considerably decreased. A number of key figures would have been retired from public office.

It is safe to say that the Kefauver Crime Committee's shadow will hang over the election in 1952. And it won't be entirely due to the efforts of the Republicans. Just as the electorate has made its own surprising decisions in the past 20 years, so it will make up its own collective mind concerning scandals and vote its own sweet way. We doubt if any election will be quite the same now that TV has its chance to take voters behind the shabby curtain that has hid the chicanery & intrigue. So far as we are concerned, the nearer we can get to conducting our government on all levels in glass houses, the sooner will come the day of true democracy and a better and cleaner way of life.

The old fashioned spirit of Town Meetings is not perfect. A minority can still manage to manoeuvre things and steamroller ill-advised legislation through. But it has 2 advantages we have not retained in our existing forms of government today. It gets real expression of all angles of a problem talked over pro and con. The leaders know pretty well how the whole electorate feels. And the stand-by character of it, whereby a few citizens can initiate the calling of a special meeting to discuss a particular problem if need be, allows for frequent look-sees & check-ups on what and how the leaders do. It makes possible a perspective and, if necessary a change of direction and policy. We need that kind of a frank, friendly family-discussion in these days of stress. Such a healthy talk-fest now and then would clarify much of the confusion that now exists. It also lessens the danger of sharp cleavages, & sectional bitterness that deteriorates into revengeful blocs being arrayed against each other.

The polls of public opinion have been discredited by a few bad forecasts. But actually under competent and responsible managers plainly operating for the good of the country, they could contribute greatly to a nation's prosperity and spiritual welfare. It is good to get a perspective on where you're going in any line of work. Any writer, I am sure, can tell you that. For a novelist it's essential. For a short story writer it helps an awful lot to keep a line of interest going straight and true and hard with impact. How much more important it should be for all of us in a democracy.

It would be a fine thing if we in this nation put first things first. If we arranged things so that our congressmen and legislators spent less time on the minor details of government and fact-finding, and more on the discussion of policy & praiseworthy goals. A nation can hire commissions to investigate, dig into the seamy side of crime. It cannot buy at any price wise governing power.

REWRITE

FUNDAMENTALS OF GOOD POETRY

By Elva Ray Harris

THE POET'S WORKSHOP

This month we are discussing Margot Foster's poem:

THIS GENTLE PEACE

No dream, however dear, can straightway be
Transmuted to reality.
Its tall and sun-tipped towers must
Crumble to ruins, fall in dust.
Beloved, let this gentle peace suffice,
Though it be less than rapture. Let us cling
Gratefully to its calm, and as a king
His crown, treasure for its intrinsic worth
The nearest thing to heaven on the earth.

The WCS Family responded with some excellent comments and friendly constructive criticism for Margot Foster. I have selected in all four of the best and will give to you—just as I received them. (Note: Bill Morrison, who helped man the Mail Boat this summer on Lake Winnepesaukee, sent in grateful thanks for all the letters we forwarded. As soon as I am through with the letters, they are sent to the poet for study. Another reason for sending these criticisms separate, so I do not need to cut them out of a letter I may wish to retain in my files.)

First we hear from Gertrude Durand, who enjoyed this poem. "I think," she says, "that 'transmuted' in line 2 is a 'little rough'. Would not 'transformed into reality' be better? In line 3 'sun-tipped towers' is lovely, but I think I would like a more suggestive and poetic word than 'tall and'. (Towers generally are tall, anyway). I haven't been able to think of just the right word.. but I am sure there is one. I'd change punctuation in lines 5, 6, 7 thus:

'Beloved, let this gentle peace suffice.
Though it be less than rapture let us cling
Gratefully to its calm'...

"I am not sure about the figure, 'As a king his crown', but maybe it is all right."

Mary Grant Charles says: "THIS GENTLE PEACE is lucid and has a pleasant tilt. But I believe it could be improved by the use of—shorter lines, and by the elimination of certain words, e.g., 'straightway', 'gratefully', and 'gentle'. Though it might necessitate changing the end rhymes of some of the other lines, I'd suggest for the first two, and the last two, lines:

'No dream, however dear, can be
At once transmuted to reality'...

...

'Treasure for its intrinsic worth
The nearest thing to heaven on earth.

If too much rhyme trouble develops with the shorter lines, perhaps a different simile—in the place of the king and his crown—could be used."

M. Iovina Cooper comments: "Poetry has two fundamental requirements: beauty and truth. Miss Foster's lines have beauty. Her words are well chosen, the rhythm good. I cannot agree with the thought. A dream, without question, can be 'transmuted to reality'. The world is filled with the proof of it. A man dreams, thinks a thing through, then creates. Were the poem meant for a fantasy, a flight of the imagination, with no attempt to state a fact, it would be different. What is stated as a truth, I cannot accept. Miss Foster may have a factual idea that is true, which I think I glimpse; I might go along with it; but unfortunately, it is not expressed that way. I think I should like Miss Foster, but I don't quite like what she did with—those nice words."

This is what Julia F. Polinski has to say: "On several readings, one finds a depth and quality to the poem overlooked on the first glance. This, I believe, makes for a 'good' poem, when the author has a deep feeling he is trying to pass on to the reader, without losing any of it.

"From my own experience, however, though trivial it may be, I disagree with her idea or thought in the 3rd & 4th lines. For they sound so final. The dreams don't have to inevitably 'crumble and fall'. After a peaceful period, and patience, she so aptly pictures in the last 5 lines, then 'dreams' may be 'transmuted to reality'.

"Instead of letting the sun-tipped towers fall, the author should let them stand, and serve as beacons of inspiration, throughout the patient period of peace and content, allowing the reader to know that after a while the dreams will actually become reality.

"Truly, this poem should not be discarded. It has a great deal to offer to someone who is frustrated by something he can't achieve immediately."

Miss Cooper and Mrs. Polinski, apparently, seem to be in substantial agreement concerning the essence of this poem. Miss Cooper's comment indicates the deficiency and Mrs. Polinski has come up with a suggestion for eliminating it. It is almost as if they were in the same room talking together. That is the way we want this Workshop to be—a room big enough and wide enough to hold everyone who wants to help.

I don't agree with Miss Durand's suggestion that "transmuted to" might better be changed to "transformed into" for two reasons. The first and most superficial is that the flow of rhythm would not be so smooth. But most important is the shade of meaning. Webster says to transform is "to change in outward-

REWRITE

shape or semblance". To transmute is "to change from one nature, form, substance, or species into another". It seems to me that the change needed to make a dream into reality is more drastic than just a change in outward shape or semblance. But I think Miss Durand is exactly right about "sun-tipped" and "tall".. "lofty" was suggested by another contributor, but I would throw that out on the basis that it has overtones of haughtiness and arrogance.

Nor do I agree with Mrs. Charles that the words "straightway" and "gentle" should necessarily be discarded. Although "at once"—which she suggested substituting—has a similar meaning, "straightway" puts it a little more forcefully. Also the position in which "straightway" is placed (before the verb) is one that gives it the emphasis it deserves. Though "at once" might be just as good in a similar position in prose, it couldn't just be put before the verb in this poem without spoiling the rhythm.

Miss Durand and Mrs. Charles have each suggested that perhaps a different simile could be used in place of the king and his crown. That is an excellent suggestion. Except for mythology and fairy tales a king's crown is more apt to be a huge responsibility than a treasure. And though he may treasure a crown it is more apt to be a turbulent treasuring than a gentle, peaceful one. This may have been a case where an author was hampered by her rhyme scheme. Speaking of rhyme scheme, notice that the fifth line doesn't rhyme with any other, and coming in the middle it does not need to.

As Mrs. Polinski says, this poem shouldn't be discarded. Basically it is a good one.

Here is the poem for discussion in December. It has received the \$1 we pay for each ms. used in the Workshops.

A PRAYER

By Jean Hoyt Smith

Life leaves its imprint on each aging face
As on a printed page for Youth to read.
Look now, Oh Youth that yours grows full
 of grace
And is not filled with pettiness and greed.
Our thoughts and actions are the type life
 uses,
And we must see that it is clean and clear
What's written on the face precludes
 excuses
We must meet life with calm and without
 fear.
It is the pettiness and greed in life
Which makes the blurs and blot on what
 should be
A lovely face, and fills its lines with
 strife.
So write your record clear for all to see.
Let all youth read how wonderful old age
May be. Ch. life print me a calm, clear open page.

Deadline for comments on this poem is: November 5th. Please send them in earlier, if you can. Poems submitted to the Workshop in every case must be accompanied by a comment on the poem currently up for discussion. We welcome additional comments on earlier poems. These will be forwarded to the authors. Payment is one dollar per poem accepted. So send them in. This is your Workshop. Help us to make it useful to you.

REPORT ON THE PROSE WORKSHOP

Future Workshops: No. 5. Short Short Story (500 words). Oct. 10th. \$1 prize.

No. 6. Dramatic Scene (300 words). November 10th. \$1. Enclose a criticism of #5.

No. 7. "Why I Want to Write." 200 words or less. December 10th. (Elizabeth Yates asked this at Durham and obtained some surprising replies. Do not enter any mss. submitted to her.) \$1 will be paid for the best one used by us.

Report on No. 4. First, my criticism. The subject of "The Law of Increase" by Mrs. Vivia Jolley, seemed dated to me although the Black Markets are said to be flourishing. I also think the opening sentence (the lead), a long and involved one, was not calculated to stir up interest. In the second paragraph there is the germ of a good lead. But again, it is "buried" in the middle of a sentence. The author could have put more punch, color and challenge to the most important person, the reader, "You", in this opening. A neat and colorful phrase that says a mouthful is more efficient than ten words.

Mrs. Julia Polinski liked this article. "I had immediately the desire to read the entire article. The second paragraph made me wish to read farther. Thus, the author has done what all good writers must do, create in a reader an interest right at the start." I would agree in spite of my criticism above. I only meant that simpler sentences and greater snap would increase the readability.

Mrs. Polinski caught an error in punctuation used to fill out a line. She also didn't like the sentence beginning with a conjunction ("But", second paragraph). I cannot agree there. Seems to me that in factua' writing, not fiction, a well placed conjunction often gives force and directs the reader in the right path; emphasizes the line of interest.

Prissilla Brookman (Canada) thought paragraph 2 contradicted the first one, and also keyed the article to a definite inspirational line. She thought the 1st paragraph, as I did, should be broken up. She suggests 3 sentences instead of one. The last should be interrogative. In the second paragraph a word such as "those" is a "weak and ineffective reference to "fear-ridden folks" in the previous paragraph. 'Such people' would be a

REWRITE

stronger reference. And the second sentence would be stronger if the first five words—"but do you realize that"—were eliminated.

"In the first sentence," Miss Brookman also comments, "the word 'materials' is vague. Does it mean building materials, war materials, supplies essential to the manufacture of chemical products or what? The items mentioned just before materials are specific—'food', 'clothing'. A word just as specific should be substituted for 'materials'."

The analysis Miss Brookman offers is very sound, and should be helpful. Remember that those who participate in the Workshops help not only others, but themselves. Because if you think through the problems of others it helps you to overcome your own very easily.

Next Contest. It has been suggested an article be written each month about the types of ms. you may be working on for the competitions in the Workshops. That is a good idea. Since the Short Short Story contest is closed before many of you will receive this issue, I will discuss the Dramatic Scene. A scene, of course, is a meeting between two or more characters. On the French stage, it is called a new scene every time a new character enters the stage. In America we term it a new scene only when the action shifts and time and place alter.

In other words, a scene is a unit and for plot purposes it is supposed to serve a definite purpose. For instance, as I have said before in REWRITE, because they are so simply and plainly visual, the great scenes in the old melodramas are good ones to study—the construction is obvious and sound. Look at the scene in "Camille" where Armand's father tells Camille he will forbid her marrying his son. The scene is a large, but single & dramatic step in the story of this romantic love story.

The father appears; the maid calls her mistress; the great duel of wits and wills and emotions is on. When Armand's father persuades Camille to relinquish her lover and to go away, the dramatic purpose is completed. The father kisses Camille's hand admiringly and departs. Then the next scene begins. If nothing happens, as in an Oscar Wilde play, it is still a scene, but not a dramatic one or a well plotted one.

Good dramatic scenes have conflict, but it is not just antagonism, or two guys slugging each other for no purpose. There must be an interesting plot situation. There must be a reason for the action; strong motivation on both sides of the fence. The characters are spurred on by strong urges and the relation between the characters is well-developed. A character comes into the scene wanting something hard. He goes out of the scene blocked and defeated; or temporarily blocked and still desiring it; or his desire has changed. One way or the other, there is dramatic

pull, and we see it exerted upon one of the characters through the action and reactions among the people of the story.

It is this tug-of-war and the infinite variety of the basic scene pattern that makes a story exciting. Sometimes the scene is long and the build-up slow; we see the screws being tightened inch by inch. Sometimes there is only a quick, sharp, staccato flash of a stiletto. It is all over in a brief, fiery, pulsating challenge, struggle and resolving of the conflict. Whatever it is, the drama, the color and the punch is exhilarating.

SOME EDITORS' REPORTS

BAPTIST LEADER, Benjamin P. Browne. 1703 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 3, Pa., tells us that "For the present year the **BAPTIST LEADER** is not running any prize awards." (It did in 1950 and writers have asked us about it for this year. Ed.)

We have seen a letter indicating that Nelson Antrim Crawford, former editor of **HOUSE** **HOYD** Magazine, has become editor of **AUTHOR & JOURNALIST**. "My plans contemplate changes in the editorial policy" (of **A&J**). So he is giving back mss. previously held in the files.

Milton Slater, **WCAX**, Burlington, Vt., apparently told members of the League of Vermont Writers at their summer Conference, he would consider poetry, short essays, & short shorts. If found worthy, they'd be read "on the air". No pay, but a credit line. Keep a copy; he's not responsible for mss. that he has not solicited. A good step. He ought to be urged to continue the experiment.

REWRITE will be a few days late this month. Blame a short month, much work and the Conference, which takes us away from our desk.

Billy 'Gee submitted green beans and won a blue ribbon at the Lunenburg Fair. We also acquired Midge, a month-old tiger kitty. Our manx cat, Piggy, sniffed disdainfully at the intrusion. Our family room (conservation of a pantry and the rear sunporch on the South) is progressing satisfactorily week-end by week-end...**REWRITE** praised again in **Boston POST**!

UNH Conference Members Attention! We are sending you the October issue, as is customary. This is a courtesy we annually pay because of the Conference reports and news. We accept no advertising, in order that we may report the whole field of writing & selling impartially and completely. Therefore, we're dependent—upon our readers for support. We hope you have enjoyed **REWRITE** and will profit from it. We also hope you will wish to subscribe and be a member of the **WCS Family**. It's quite easy for you to earn a very high "return" on your small investment of \$2.00. At any rate, do let us hear from you occasionally. We are interested in your progress and that of all writers, who are trying to climb the ladder. Good luck and best wishes.

REWRITE

HOW'S YOUR BATTING AVERAGE?

Here are the acceptances reported to us in a much longer than usual period since we put the September issue to bed early in August.

John E. Pember
Mystery Story: Am. Championship Crosswords
Puzzle Magazine.

Marjorie S. Scheuer
Poem: C.S. MONITOR and N.Y. TIMES.

Carrie Esther Hammil
Story: MY CHUM. Poem: N.E. HOMESTEAD.

Mrs. Arthur F. Snow
Filler: WORCESTER TELEGRAM (People, and
Places Column).

Evelyn Reed
Filler: FARM JOURNAL.

Florence M. Davis
Story: CLASSMATE.

Lillian Stickney
Prose Pieces: Boston Daily & Sunday POST
COLLECTOR-HOBBYIST.
Poem: RURAL NEW YORKER.

Kathryn Wilson
Article: King Features Syndicate.

Ann Ashworth
Juvenile Short Story: TINY TOTS

Helen Langworthy
Articles: STATE JOURNAL (Mich.) & THESE
TIMES. (Quick report on the latter.)

Mayteel Fedash
Article: AVE MARIA.
Column: FRANCISCAN MESSAGE.

Jewell W. Hammond
10 Articles (A Series): CLASSMATE.

F. Louis Friedman
Articles: POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY, NATIONS'
BUSINESS.

Helen Langworthy (Add.)
Filler: C.S. MONITOR.
Feature: Grand Rapids PRESS.

Minnie Blanche Rittgers
Poem: Christian HERALD.

Gilean Douglas
Feature: FARM JOURNAL. (New market. He
sells several pieces a week.)

Virginia Sievert
Poem & Story: OUR LITTLE FRIEND.

The WCS Family has been busy the last part of the summer! We are glad to see that business is booming. It proves that editors in all periods continue to buy, if you're smart and persistent. Dig and tell us the results

"MAKE EVERY WORD COUNT!"

We ran across a lot of long, very involved sentences in the short stories we read at Durham this year. That is an important, and often overlooked minor detail of successful fiction. It is not necessary to write nothing but simple sentences, and to keep those sentences short, as in pulp stories. But is essential to keep the flow of ideas of story line and emotional impact always crystal clear. You never commit a sin by making the story easy to read.

One of the worst variations of this weakness is the opening paragraph that is choked with words, and full of long sentences. A good opening sentence is short, clipped and succinct. It shocks the reader with a carefully loaded implication of meaning. It arrests his attention and builds his curiosity. The whole essence of the situation usually is contained there in capsule form. If the author is a good writer, the first paragraph sets the tone and the style, too.

Both Preston H. Williams & Gilean Douglas had poems in KALEIDOGRAHY (July).

New England HOMESTEAD is reported as being "very overstocked on poetry" by one of WCS' market observers. (This was in August.)

In a recent issue of the Boston POST (Sunday) leading the "Women's Forum" was a helpful article on writing. It was written by a member of the WCS Family, who signed herself merely as "Nonaldora". Muriel Caswall, editor of the Household Section in which this & other features of interest to home-makers & writers appear, is an old friend of ours. It is more than kind of her to mention REWRITE frequently to the writers she encourages in a friendly, interested way. She has started many a woman writer on her way.

Other WCS Family Members in Print. Mabel I. Huggins, a word puzzle in GIRLS TODAY in June...Bill Vinton, featured filler in FARM JOURNAL (Sept.)...Helen S. Neal, article in the same issue (FARMER'S WIFE).

Leta Meston, active worker for the Anonymus Workshop, has a short story in the Fall issue of PRAIRIE SCHOONER.

University of Kansas City Press has signed an agreement to use "all facilities" and thus develop a "joint-publishing venture" in collaboration with Twayne Publishers of NYC.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES reported Aug. 7th it was "even more overstocked in fiction than in non-fiction." (Also commented on the popularity among its readers of Gracye Dodge White's stories. She's a member of the WCS Family.)

"It was terrific" was a cliché that got a terrific work-out at Durham. Everyone used, abused and finally discarded it. Someone eventually made fun of the craze, panned it.

REWRITE

WHAT IS OFFENSIVE?

When the Rutledge murder trial took place 2 years ago at Cedar Rapids, Ia., the AP report was pretty "raw". The State University of Iowa surveyed 167 persons' reactions and opinions on the use of 47 statements, ranging from "seduced", "hell", "stabbed bodies" to stronger phrases. Only 9 persons cleared everything as inoffensive. "Bad words" were the most often cause of offense. The general conclusions:

- (1) Even the least offensive statements offended a few people.
- (2) Even the most offensive statements were found unoffensive by a good many persons.
- (3) What was offensive to one person wasn't to others.
- (4) The "polite evasions" (circumlocutions) are usually less offensive than the less ambiguous, blunter words.
- (5) The mere statement that a sex act had taken place was less offensive than the tone of the passage reporting the facts (details).
- (6) The radio coverage (other reports, over and beyond the AP report) contained "little offensive material". (More careful editing.)
- (7) "People seem to rate references to sex, obscenity, profanity and gruesome details," higher on a scale of "poor taste" than on a scale of actual "offensiveness".

For further details of this study consult JOURNALISM QUARTERLY and EDITOR & PUBLISHER.

We think this proves the old rule of thumb is still good: it is always better to "suggest" than to over-write too literally. But also avoid the suggestive double entendre.

Churchwomen to Write Original Programs

New York—The Woman's Auxiliary of the Episcopal Church is seeking talent inside the Auxiliary itself, for the purpose of writing meeting programs. Under the general title "The Stewardship of Talent," it is asking women to write and submit programs of the kind they would like to see used in Auxiliary groups throughout the Church. In the invitation it is said that the plan will give women with a talent for creative writing an opportunity to contribute their talents to the work of the Church; that programs submitted will be indicative of the kind desired; that hidden ability will be disclosed.

LOOK INTO THIS

This interesting innovation was announced in a recent news item, which was released by: The National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 281 Fourth Ave., NYC 10. Women of this faith, who write, should swing into production of ideas. They could easily establish an extremely effective opportunity for future generations of writers to learn their craft.

It is just from trial workshops similar to these that Tomorrow recruits its new & promising young writers.

HERE'S A GIMMICK!

Carl Victor Little, book critic for Houston PRESS, guarantees his "8-star specials" and in 3 years has paid out only \$20 to the readers who disagreed with him. Benn Hall Associates (a publicity firm) say: "Here is a feature that might well be followed by local columnists and critics." On whose money?

The same BHA Newsletter reports newspaper gossip that Bill Hearst, Jr. is going to cut off a lot of heads, including the "Marion Davies set". Hearst papers are expected to give more play to local news. BHA therefore, expects more "breaks for authors when there's a 'local boy makes good' angle." Maybe.

The radio industry (1,500 stations) is in on a nation-wide campaign to "create in young America a regard for books as intriguing and exciting adventure." Well known reviewers—in cooperation with Broadcast Music—are to review certain classics. These reviews then can be used as 15-minute features sponsored by local public libraries. (We don't intend please turn to Page 10)

HERE IS A CHALLENGE

Here is a specific, wide-open opportunity for some writer to do a job that a minister has taken on only because no one else has seen the chance to do it. He would undoubtedly welcome cooperation by local writer.

But the story opens up a situation, which has universal implications. The steady decrease in the number of newspapers, and the widening coverage attempted by those, which are left behind, offers a challenge to writers. It is a challenge that on one extreme promises a rather "thin" circulation in communities that are still being settled. While at the other extreme is the veiled refusal, backed by economic threats of reprisal, of a newspaper already on the scene and offering inadequate service, to allow someone else to enter the field.

I know of one instance here in New England where a newspaperman set his son up as publisher of a small town paper. The city newspaper nearby promptly exerted pressure on its own advertisers not to support the new paper. Here in our own area of Lunenburg & the surrounding towns, we see the disadvantages of having three nearby city newspapers, none of which is willing to give full coverage to the news and life of the small outlying communities. The high cost of paper that would result from the increased circulation, makes the effort unattractive. Yet the communities need better representation.

Rector is Publisher— Editor too—of Town's Only Newspaper

Is Church and Civic Leader

Richmond, Va. — When he could not interest anyone in publishing a local newspaper, the Rev. Stewart Bryan West, rector of Grace Episcopal Church, Goochland Courthouse, started issuing a paper, himself. It is a three-page mimeographed news letter, combined with a schedule of church services.

REWRITE

HOW BAD CAN THE BOOK BUSINESS BE?

The Book Trade was astounded in mid-Sept. by the announcement that Doubleday & Co. is going to pay transportation costs on books, which they ship to booksellers and jobbers. This may seem like a small item, but Doubleday is said to ship close to 1,000,000 books a month. On our WRITERS' BOOK CLUB volume it could easily run into a lot of dollars each month. On the first 12 orders we handled in 1951, for instance, the parcel post charges alone amounted to \$3.79. (In many cases the reshipment by us to our customer doubled the cost included in this total.) So, you easily can estimate what it would amount to for 100 orders or 1,000. You can also reckon as a very considerable saving for the customer the transportation cost plus the Book Dividend saving, which patrons of WRITERS' BOOK CLUB enjoy.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

We culled the box reprinted immediately below from the N.Y. Herald Tribune recently. We sympathize with the doctor because both Elva and Bill had to learn writing under similar conditions. For 5 years I did an awful lot of newspaper work in that fashion literally. And reporting for a paper that appeared at noon, much of my writing had, of necessity, to be done after midnight, on top of an eight hour day spent in a non-writing office.

"Five Minutes, Ten Minutes"

DR. WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS, practicing physician and practicing poet of Rutherford, N. J., introducing his autobiography, which Random will publish on Sept. 17, his sixty-eighth birthday:

"Five minutes, ten minutes, can always be found. I had my typewriter in my office desk. All I needed to do was to push up the leaf to which it was fastened and I was ready to go. I worked at top speed. If a patient came in at the door while I was in the middle of a sentence, bang would go the machine—I was a physician. When the patient left, up would come the machine. My head developed a technique: something growing inside me demanded reaping. It had to be attended to. Finally, after eleven at night, when the last patient had been put to bed, I could always find the time to bang out ten or twelve pages. In fact, I couldn't rest until I had freed my mind from the obsessions which had been tormenting me all day. Cleansed of that torment, having scribbled, I could rest."

or made memorable in ten minute bouts or in top speed writing against time. My newspaper work was hack writing, even though I did critical reviews and feature writing for the Boston TRANSCRIPT, which expected & demanded of all of its writers a quality standing up favorably against the best magazine writing of the day. It was not "creative" writing, which requires even more concentration & ripe, mature thought. Many great classics—more's the pity—have been written under unfavorable conditions. But the authors would be the first to admit they could have written better if they had not had to work with one hand and struggle for sheer existence & professional livelihood with the other. The demand for courage and fortitude alone won't guarantee great writing.

Another thing, I have the feeling in read-

ing this excerpt from Dr. Williams' introduction of himself, that he has fallen into another very prevalent snare for writers: that of romanticizing one's commonplace job of being a writer and recollecting in heroic capitals, so to speak, the prosaic tasks which had to be accomplished under difficulties. I know from my own experience that we are all prone to adopt the little boy custom of trying to attract attention by shouting, by seeing things with eyes widened by excitement, and by designful, if often not deliberately mendacious, glamorizing.

That is not a very scientific way to be a reporter. No matter how much we love our art or how much enthusiasm we bring to it, there is always need to be objective in our technical approach to it. Good writing inescapably and inevitably is the result of blending emotion with cool, careful intellect. A writer in the actual writing needs to throw his very heart into the job. But just as industry today depends more and more upon the highly tempered steels and hard alloy metals that man has devised through research, so we writers need to temper our writing with all the strengthening toughness and elasticity, poise and human insight that we can bring to bear out of our experience, reading & study of materials.

The doctor who patiently takes notes upon his own slow death from cancer or X-ray injuries can be an excellent and not over-sensationalized example for us constantly to emulate. We should seek truth as unequivocally and with as little vainglorious emphasis upon self. It is nice to receive credit and a by-line in capitals. But after all it's always our effect on our readers that we ought to keep uppermost in our hearts. If we do a good turn for humanity and for the team, we have not lived in vain.

And so we return to that matter of trying to serve two masters. Writers like to brag, to tell how hard it was for them to achieve a certain book or story. Of how they put together a work of art while they were supposed to be adding dreary figures for the Keep Clean Soap Co. But, and this is not sarcasm at the expense of Dr. Williams, while doing two jobs simultaneously is often necessary, ordinarily if you try to do two uncomplementary tasks at the same time, you will not do either very well. So, in place of Dr. Williams' idea of keeping a typewriter in the office, I would suggest that a writer learn to departmentalize his life, separate his twin roles. In this way he will render a sufficiently satisfactory service at the office, yet conserve some of his vitality for evening & week-end writing.

You can do a great deal if you plan out a program and make every minute count. Great, technically outstanding writing can't be done in stolen seconds or under tension. But the careful, disciplined thought that leads forward to great creative work, can. Bit by bit.

REWRITE

THE DURHAM CHAP BOOK, ETC.

Once again this year the Durham Chap Book prize award was given to two poets. Jointly sponsored by Ioring Williams AMERICAN WRAVE publisher, and Bill & Elva of REWRITE, it is a feature of the UNH Conference. So Blanche Gile and Pearl Iunt Robinson are the poets, who will be published soon in a small book-size brochure of approximately 500 lines of verse. Both poets had attended the UNH Conference in previous years.

Playwrights, Attention. Early in September ten rural and city play groups working with the New York State Fair Theater, gave 4 performances a day for 5 days (free admission) of various one-act plays. Last year all the performances, starting at 5 P.M. were packed.

This sounds like a good "show-esse" opportunity for playwrights. Both at this fair & others throughout the country, playwrights, I would think, might do well to explore the possibilities for being seen and heard in a good try-out. The quality of the plays used is said to be high.

AMERICAN AGRICULTURIST, Dept. F, Savings Bank Bldg., Ithaca, N. Y., offers prizes of \$20, \$15, \$10 & \$5 for the best letters regarding what kind of an America young men & women want. Contestants must not be 21 till 1952. Letters not over 600 words. The contest closes: October 20, 1951.

Our thanks to Mrs. Frank Hextrew & Lola D. Zautner for Commemorative stamps sent in to us, the sale of which will benefit our fund to aid handicapped and shut-in writers. The gift in each case was a result of a notice, which a friend of a member of the WCS Family inserted in CONTEST Magazine.

A POETRY EDITOR SPEAKS OUT

A well known publisher of a poetry magazine recently sent us the elaborate brochure issued by a "cooperative" publisher, who disclaims any connection with vanity publishing such as we commented upon in our last issue. This firm has been spending large sums in the writers' magazines, attempting to prove the deal it offers writers is less odorous than that presented by other vanity publishers. A curious coincidence, however, is that "contract" details are almost identical: a high royalty on a small print run (which is obviously mathematically impossible, except when the victim puts up the cash (working capital) to repay himself!) and claims of promotion, publicity, etc., which rarely materialize or result in professional attention by working members of the review staffs on literary or national circulation magazines.

Our editor friend, who knows whereof he is talking, categorically denies that a 64-page book can make a profit with a sale of "about 700 copies". He adds biting, "You & I are

aware that a book published in this way, is lucky if it sells 70 copies (I'd say 7! Ed.) not to speak of 700." He further adds: "What I object to is not the method of bringing out books so much as the half-truths concealed amid the mealy verbiage as a bait for the unwary, who, I am afraid, still number legion."

He is, of course, completely right. This particular folder is full of non sequitur references to big name writers and their ms. A writer has every right to publish his works himself. I know of books that have appeared in this way and have later been republished by legitimate publishers. It is also unfortunately true that "legitimate" publishers, occasionally, publish books on a subsidized basis, the money passing hands under the table or sub rosa, so to speak, so that the reader does not know that he is buying a literary product the publisher does not completely stand behind. But in neither case does a book carry the stigma of a vanity press. As Herschel Brickell said at Durham, it is the "imprint value" that counts. A "legitimate" publisher won't sell his name and allow any writer of inferior goods to make indiscriminate use of it. But a vanity press will every time. That is why publication under any vanity imprint is always malodorous, and avoided by critics and general readers.

REWRITE Receives Another Royalty Check. In September we mentioned that REWRITE is being microfilmed for permanent economical reference. When we returned from Durham we found a royalty statement from University Microfilms, 313 N. First St., Ann Arbor, Michigan. The number of purchasers of REWRITE in this new medium is growing. It is gratifying that the 1949 and 1950 volumes are being bought. The filming is done at the end of the volume year, which for REWRITE is December.

The ARCHER, Elinor Henry & Wilfred Brown, Box 3857, V.C.Ste., North Hollywood, Cal., is announced as a—"more or less" literary-quarterly. Purposes are to encourage "good writing, to give pleasure and entertainment to readers; to break even financially, if possible." It will use verse, short fiction, essays, humor, sketches, anecdotes, etc. The verse may or may not rhyme. "Frequent prize contests. One contributor's copy." The fall issue is the first.

A long mimeo letter from Cecile Bonham of Poets' Haven. Tell's interestingly of trips, which she took in order to look in upon the various handicapped and shut-in writers she ran across in travelling over a wide area.

The R. M. Neal Memorial Fund. We filed a report and accounting at the final dinner at Durham. Two more contributions were received and have been forwarded to Helen Neal. A total of almost \$100 has now been given—20 contributors from nine states. We know that the money has helped Helen and her 5 children materially to bridge a difficult period in their lives.

REWRITE

Cont'd from Page 5.

to be cynical, because we believe this is a fine boost of one written medium by another. But we cannot help remembering that at this moment Radio is fighting for its life. So, we wonder if at least one or two radio "moguls" are not happily remembering those awful child (snob) appeal TV ads., published last spring, as they speed this worthy project to fruition. Show Business is sometimes like that. Instead of killing two birds, you "win" by kicking the other fellow downstairs.)

THIS MONTH'S NEW BOOKS

RADIO & TELEVISION WRITING. Max Wyllie. Rinehart & Co. \$6.50. This is not a new book. It is a rewritten book that has been brought up to date. It covers TV as well as anyone can cover such an expanding industry. It is the "bible" of the radio industry, written by a successful, practicing radio man. It has illustrative material drawn from actual scripts or significant parts of them. Both radio and TV. Wyllie has done a lot of acute thinking, about radio & TV, and creative writing. For my money, it is a primer that everyone, who hopes to write professionally, but especially for these two media, should read. WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Selection.

THE YOUNG VISITORS. Daisy Ashford. Doubleday & Co. \$1.75. A new edition of the celebrated book by a 9-year old girl, introduced by Sir James Barrie, which many critics, some 40 years ago, accused Sir James of actually writing himself. Humor is a very unpredictable material; and when you get into the field of "unintentional humor", involving the differences between child and adult reactions, you really are getting complex. It doesn't seem so "darned funny" now after the lapse of nearly half-a-century. An example of how not to write fiction, it has its moments. But that is a specialized humor of interest only to writers.

A READER FOR WRITERS. Ed. William Targ. Hermitage House. \$3.50. This is the first volume in a new series, the Professional Writers' Library. The editor and Gorham Munson, the new editor at Hermitage House, have collaborated to get this workshop library off to an exciting start. For 27 writers, editors, critics contribute as many exceptionally valuable pieces about writing or their personal craftsmanship. There is a chapter by Paul Gallico, "Max" Perkins' great letter of detailed creative-criticism to Marcia Davenport about a novel, Stevenson's comment on "Treasure Island", Edith Wharton's on "The Writing of 'Ethan Frome'" and many others. A lot of them are hard to find, all of them worth reading, if you take your own craftsmanship seriously. A WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Choice.

BORN THAT WAY. Dr. Earl R. Carlson. John Day Co. \$2.50. This, the 10th edition, represents a special one, especially made for & largely distributed, we gather, by the magazine, LETTER, Ada P. McCormick, Tucson, Ariz. Thus

BOOKS OF PERMANENT WORTH

WRITERS ON WRITING. Ed. Herschel Brickell.. \$3.00. Handbook of the UNH Conference. Covers a wide number of fields. Bill has chapters on the Short Story and Critica Agents, and their relation to writers. Good book.

PLOT DIGEST. Kobold Knight. \$4.00. WRITERS' BOOK CLUB is the exclusive American agent. A very practical and helpful book. We're proud of the fact that through our efforts it has been made available to writers at \$4.00 instead of the original price of \$7.00. English in background, it is universal in application. We recommend it.

WRITING THE CONFESSION STORY. Dorothy Collett. \$2.50. This book is a sound one, helpful to the general fiction writer as well as the Confession specialist. We recommend it.

HOW TO WRITE FOR PLEASURE & PROFIT. Ed. Warren Bower. \$4.95. Handbook. In spite of an unappealing title, this is a good book. The wide coverage is made possible by excellent specialized chapters, written by experts or big name writers. We recommend it highly.

THE MATURE MIND. Harry Overstreet. \$2.95. A truly great mind formulates principles that are equally applicable to writing as well as living. Every writer will be a better writer for reading it. An essential book.

ARTICLE WRITING & MARKETING. George I. Bird. \$5.50. A practical book for the professional writer and the beginner. The author, and his students have sold widely.

THE CRAFT OF THE SHORT STORY. Richard Summers. \$5.50. Companion book on fiction. Good.

WRITING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. Mabel Louise Robinson. \$2.75. A fine book by the leader, and herself an active practitioner, of the Columbia University Fiction Workshop. She has written many books of fiction and non-fiction. This one about writing for older 'teen' agers, has been recommended each year at the UNH Conference for several years by another juvenile writer, who has also expanded into the adult field, Elizabeth Yates. A practical and helpful book.

an unusual book first selected by the courageous and discriminating publisher, Richard J. Walsh, is kept in active circulation and personally recommended by a disinterested & impartial magazine publisher. (We like such personal enthusiasms for the written word.) This book is the account of how with help & encouragement from many persons, Earl Carlson overcame his own serious spastic condition, and became a specialist in ministering help for many other unfortunate victims. An exciting spiritual adventure, which nevertheless should offer all writers, and handicapped persons strength to live bravely and devote their gifts to their fellow men.

REWRITE

BILL AND ELVA TAKE TO THE ROAD

Bill & Elva really went wandering off the usual beat this summer. Starting for the UNH Conference early, they spent an evening and parts of two days at the Maine Writers' Conference at Ocean Park. They even talked for a few minutes on the program and spoke during social hours with friends they'd previously known only by correspondence. It was particularly nice to meet Mrs. Jessie Wheeler Freeman, who has done so much to put the Poetry Fellowship of Maine on a firm foundation. And Louise Daroy and her poetry group from Biddeford. They offered an excellently organized poetry workshop that would be even more valuable another year, if they gave more of their own wide and valuable experience, and if the workshop was thrown open to general discussion.

The Maine Writers' Conference, it appeared clear to Bill and Elva, fills such a real need and tries to cover so much ground, the running time should be lengthened and spent as efficiently as possible. This year audiences were held in session for too long intervals without a break or a chance for general discussion. The result was that while, with one or two exceptions, the speaking was informal, but stimulating, several opportunities to answer the questions of individual writers were missed.

Dropping down the Coast, Bill and Elva enjoyed several long days of swimming & loafing on the glorious beaches at Ogunquit and Kennebunkport. They checked into Durham just in time for the Sunday night staff supper & meeting at Carroll Towle's house. Both the staff and the Conference were smaller, about 100 all told. Small enough for some excellent close work with the contributors. Bill and Elva handled four of the 7 sessions devoted to the short story, Herschel Brickell and other members of the staff taking leadership in the remainder. Once again, short stories, with the possible exception of the poetry, were the most numerous single classification of mss. Twenty-four contributors brought 62 mss. Bill, and Elva for the week that she was there, managed to read all but one or two of these stories. Bill held 21 conferences and Elva approximately a dozen. Other members of the staff helped out after doing their work in their special fields. It was the first time that Bill and Elva, so far as the ms. reading was concerned, practically-speaking carried the major part of the responsibility, since Herschel was pinned down with half a dozen novels and Carroll by his direction of the Conference.

This year because of the many lines in the cafeteria much of the informal conversation between the conferees and the staff was lost. Only the Charles Angoff, with 7-year old Nancy, Bill & Elva, and Herschel Brickell coming in from his apartment for a second cup of breakfast coffee, ate regularly at Commons. The rest of the staff went to Grant's or the

faculty dining room. This reduced the number of pleasant round-the-table shoptalks which have proved such a popular feature always in past years at Durham.

Getting out of Durham in a hurry on Saturday morning after the Conference closed, Elva and Bill caught the 11 A.M. boat for the Isles of Shoals, nine miles out to sea from Portsmouth. For 30 hours of warm, sunlit, almost perfect summer weather, Bill and Elva, relaxing under the ocean breezes, pretended they had never heard of writing. Only a few persons interested in writing were uncovered and except for a visit to the windswept, untended grave of the poet, Celia Thaxter on abandoned Appledore Island, the subject was not mentioned either by the Appalachian Mt. Club party with whom Bill & Elva were travelling, or the small Unitarian conference. So came to an end two weeks and three days, in which friendly contacts with several hundred new acquaintances were made & enjoyed.

"URGENCY" IS ALL-IMPORTANT

At Durham, as everywhere, we ran into the inexperienced writers' unshatterable belief that if only they could find an agent willing to handle them, most of their difficulties in selling would disappear in thin air. That is ridiculous, of course, but it's the strongly held theory of many writers who are by no means inexperienced.

The number of writers having anything the average reputable agent feels certain he can sell, is very small. Jon Aley of Maxwell Aley Associates visited the Conference again this year. He found only one or two writers with propositions he considered at all practical for him to handle. (He spoke interestingly in an afternoon panel discussion shared by Herschel Brickell, Charles Angoff and Bill, with Carroll Towle. Bill's portion of the program consisted mainly in definitions of agents, critic-agents and vanity presses. He sought to turn the spotlight on Jon, and in the very limited time to draw out all of the questions about agents the large audience had accumulated. John's specific answers out of his wide experience, supplemented by the editorial experience of Herschel & Charles, made for a valuable hour-and-a-half.)

The fallacy (and bit of wish fulfillment) that most writers stumble over is the irrepressible hope that they can just write and let someone else find the market. But professional writing is not done that way. The experienced writer has an idea which he has an instinctive feeling (1) will sell to the individual market he has in mind for it, or (2) for some market in a certain category. A beginning writer on the other hand just has a vague idea and closing his eyes, writes. Most of the mss. we read at Durham were not endowed with much editorial purpose. There were several conferees present, though, who could write with enough narrative drive for an editor to wish there was purpose there.

REWRITE

RULES FOR PLAYWRITING

Here is a paragraph to interest would-be-dramatists. (It also applies to much of the writing, fiction and otherwise that is being done today.) It strikes us as a little cumbersome and wordy, but the sense is there.

"A play to be interesting & lifting must offer three attributes. First, it must—explore new territories in our knowledge, convictions and emotions and exhilarate us with its findings, or, if the territories are not new, must treat them with an increased imagination, wit and eloquence. Secondly, it must, if our belief in its thesis is already sufficiently established, refreshen and revivify it with the tonics of hitherto neglected arguments and philosophies, and with the splendors and beautiful song of language... And, thirdly, it must, however reluctantly, indulge in those little dabs of relieving-chicane that, like cosmetics, make acceptable and appealing its otherwise honest, if too plain face."

In case you haven't guessed, that's George Jeen Nathan via news release by his publisher (Alfred A. Knopf) about his new book, the "Theater Book of the Year, 1950-51". On second thought, we believe Mr. Nathan could do worse than take a few days' rest from his beloved theater and rediscover that "beautiful song of language" to which he refers. For, it's true that a guy can love and beat a tune on his typewriter too hard or continuously. Salvation for a writer lies not in chaining himself to his typewriter and beating it and himself ragged. There are times when a true devotion to one's art shows itself in getting the wholeness of life's broad fabric into one's writing rather than in trying ever to increase one's production. Which fact may or may not have any relevance in relation to the above paragraph from Mr. Nathan.

THE BALANCED LIFE IS THE IDEAL

Curiously, just after I wrote the article immediately above, I read a stimulating one by Dr. Donald Siehl in OSTEOPATHIC concerning "That Great American Malady". Amusingly he refers to the annual "cycle of pressure-working and pressure-playing, with little attempt to use moderation in either." He makes a real point regarding the erroneous method behind much of our American way of life. We work too drivingly and play the same way. We always have to be "busy", always doing something. The result is that while our production with resulting material rewards is the envy of a good part of the world, we're paying a far too costly price for it. For the factor of strain from tension is growing. It is the real cause of much of our bad health and premature death rates being higher than they should be. Not to mention accidents on the highways.

A very good article could be written on a number of obvious points springing from Dr.

Siehl's essay:

(1) Business has been tending to put production gains ahead of personnel welfare.

(2) Labor's reaction has been the defensive one of the "slow down" and shorter work times both daily and weekly.

(3) Both Capital and Labor have encouraged, possibly unthinkingly, a separation between responsibility and remuneration. The results are evidenced in (A) the system that pays the foremen less than those who simply turn out high speed piece work; and (B) the rather marked tendency in industry just now that causes too many men and women to try to work two full-time jobs simultaneously, and on end. (It can't be done; even the toughest guys break under the strain.)

(4) Playtime not correlated to worktime is incapable of providing happiness. Dr. Siehl quotes Dr. Florence I. Meredith in her book "Hygiene", that, "Qualitatively, recreation should balance work, bringing different energies predominantly into action." Actually, that covers only the physical reaction. Labor has discovered both as a result of shorter weeks and during strikes that merely to be like little boys freed from school, soon becomes excessively boring. Hobbies therefore, cannot be pursued merely the way some executives play Squash, because it reduces to 15 minutes time they'd otherwise have to "waste" in physical exercise. Leisure time unless a plan for using it is set up, becomes valueless. It must be integrated fully.

(5) A philosophy of life, and understanding of human relationships in the world and our own community is necessary for complete enjoyment of both work and play. Dr. Siehl, therefore, is not completely right, when he says: "We are still too prone to measure success in terms of material gain rather than in terms of personality development." As I have tried to indicate, leisure time alone isn't the answer. Nor is "personality development". Dale Carnegie and the Powers modelling, and a hundred other similar schools of poise or speech or good manners, will develop personality for you. That is not enough. The old saying is yet a true one: use your gifts or they will back-fire and destroy you.

All of this may seem pedantic and abstract so far as writers are concerned. But it actually is vitally important. At Durham, the lack of a definite point of view toward the art and craft of living and writing becomes perhaps more visible to the naked eye. Living and talking writing intensely as we do for ten days, we see more easily the line of interest that motivates each individual writer. That is one reason why I purposely visit the Commons and eat with the conferees—three times a day and sit and chat with all of them as much as I possibly can. I know that I help them and do some of my best teaching by sharpening in their minds the reason why

REWRITE

they want to write. (This year, our friend, Elizabeth Yates, gave her conferees the assignment to tell why they wanted to write.. She got some very interesting reasons.)

For a writer, then, cycles of pressure in work and play are sometimes unavoidable, but vacations that are separated in neat watertight compartments from his work, are obviously not practical. He must devote his life to development of character, yes, but also to spiritual growth and understanding of whatever meaning he can find in life. It is the old story of filling his pitcher so that he can pour. His must be the well balanced life that makes him a citizen of the world and a fruitful user of whatever talents God gives him.

DON'T WRITE "OFF THE TOP"

This is a phrase we used a lot at Durham. It seemed appropriate for quite a few ms. & even ideas we discussed with writers. It is one of those editorial snap cliches that in a single word or two sum up what would otherwise require a long circumlocution to explain a defect in a ms. It is only useful if everyone knows what it means, and if it can be used precisely. A phrase that allows you to duck out from telling someone exactly in a visual manner what you mean is merely the same as politely lying, equivocating or taking money under false pretenses.

"Off the top" means that a writer is just skimming the surface. He has not thought an idea completely through. In a more complete and overall manner it is the equivalent, let us say, of failing to "milk a scene dry". In other words, you haven't extracted the full values. One of the ways a writer can always dodge full responsibility is to say that in a particular story he has tried to do a mystery story, or be psychological, or any one of a dozen other special effects. But great story-tellers are so good, have realized the full possibilities of their material enough so that they are able to win the admiration even of those readers who do not go for the type of story set before them.

I read a series of essays and sketches in which a writer very sincerely expressed her religious faith. When I came to work on the ms. a night or two ago, I found that while I believe strongly in the same ideas, an identical philosophy, this woman didn't convince me. Her philosophy seemed "pinned on" and something she was adding to the material from the outside. It did not come out as her deep and abiding philosophy. I felt as though if a worldly person had come along & viewed the same set of experiences, she would have interpreted them very differently. It is of course ridiculous to suppose that you can only write convincingly of what you have experienced. A good writer can give the illusion that he has experienced everything.. He does this by getting inside his material and his own understanding of it. It's his.

UNH AND WCS SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

We were very happy at the UNH Conference, observing one of our WCS Family make excellent use of the Dorothy Towle Scholarship. A fellowship, given anonymously, that enables a promising writer to enjoy the full program and all activities of the Conference free & clear of expense. (There are other scholarships that pay only the tuition.)

It was announced at the final dinner that the contributors to the first edition of the UNH Conference handbook, "Writers on Writing", at a meeting attended by a minority of them, had voted to work out a voluntary plan that would permit individual members to contribute certain royalty checks presently due to them towards a second Dorothy Towle Scholarship. Also, that other members of the Conference could similarly contribute to this fund which would be separate and distinct in its purpose from the Carroll S. Towle Scholarship Fund. The latter, directed by Carroll, gives the partial scholarships to the Conference.

The WCS Scholarship Fund, which was formed to bring REWRITE and/or WCS help to handicapped or shut-in writers, has been quietly receiving a number of gifts for its work. Marion Dalton and Mary Iothrop are the most recent donors. A variety of gifts of stamps to be sold and the results credited, are recorded, or have been, elsewhere in REWRITE. Carrie Esther Hammil and one or two members of one or another of her Robins are regular contributors in this way.

To all of these we offer thanks in behalf of those who benefit. The WCS Fund, and, it is my recollection, the Carroll S. Towle Fund is a revolving one in the sense that any of those recipients who are able to repay help given them, thus share in aiding others who may be worse off than they themselves. Many of our handicapped friends cling to, & make inspiring use of this privilege. The details always remain confidential, however. We do not publish information as to who has benefited. We can divulge, however, that in the present calendar year of tension the expenditures generously exceed the receipts.

Speaking of these things, it perhaps ought to be recorded that Billy 'Gee attended his first Jimmy Fund all star baseball game, at Fitchburg. He contributed his mite for this worthy work in the research fight now being waged against cancer in children. He was impressed by the Fort Devens band and remarkable all-colored drill platoon, as well as a brief appearance of Sibby Sisti of the Boston Braves. Gee's parents were even more impressed by the magnificently musical lilt of the drill sergeant's soft Southern voice. So he did not need to be steely tough to obtain perfect unison during an intricate routine.

REWRITE protested strongly to Congressmen against the further increases in postal rates that will cripple writers & magazines.

REWRITE

NEWS RIGHT FROM THE TICKER

California Writers' Club, (no central address given, Ed.), announces the Ormeida Keeler Writing Contest, with prizes of \$50, \$35, \$25, for fiction, non-fiction and poetry respectively. A second prize in all 3 categories of \$10. It is hoped that this will be an annual contest. Closes: Feb. 28, 1952, & winners to be announced at the Club's meeting in June. Mss. must be submitted to separate judges. No central office, but bulletin apparently available from Miss Yeta Weston, 32 Edgewood Ave., Mill Valley, Calif.. A registration fee must accompany each entry (\$50?). These are limited to one to a writer in each category. (REWRITE has never approved any contest requiring an entry fee. And in this case we believe someone in authority should have been designated in the bulletin to receive inquiries, since the contest is not limited to the Club's members and is open to all writers.)

The \$5,000 Frieder Literary Award, Rabbi Jay Kaufman, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 838 5th Ave., at 65th St., NYC, is sending out post cards calling attention to this change of address. And also to closing date: Nov. 15, 1951.

BLUE BOOK, 230 Park Ave., NYC 17, has now got a new editor, Maxwell Hamilton, formerly of Fawcett's MOTION PICTURE. He took over, we are informed, on Oct. 1st. We have asked for further details, on new plans, requirements, etc.

Claridge Publishing Co. (and Labor Library Book Club), 300 4th Ave., NYC 10. This is a new address.

"For Profit" Copyright Bill Voted by House Subcommittee

The Bryson subcommittee of the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee has favorably reported H.R. 3589, the bill bringing under copyright protection the recording and performing rights to literary property, (PW, April 21, May 12) with an amendment restricting the extension of copyright protection to non-dramatic literary works performed or recorded for profit.

commercial value in a literary property". But the lawyers advising in this matter consider that on the whole this amendment of present copyright protection is satisfactory. A writer should urge his Congressmen to stand up and vote for this measure.

Should You Subscribe? What about the magazines that deduct a year's subscription on your first acceptance? It seems mean on the face of it. But The Christian Education Co. gives the editor's side: contributors get a copy automatically & a chance to get further copies before the run is exhausted. Moreover it saves bookkeeping & keeps contributors familiar with the magazine, at half the regular sub. cost. That sounds fair. See P.16

SOME PROBLEMS IN RIGHTS

We were asked recently about the possibility of re-selling a ms. that had been previously sold to a Canadian market. The author was thinking of American markets. The difficulty here is that most American magazines have some Canadian circulation. The original publication would have grounds for complaint in that case.

I am not an agent and do not pretend to be up on the complex details of such sales. It is my impression, however, that (1) most of the first class American magazines wouldn't wish to run material on "second North American rights". (2) Newspapers would be willing to buy second rights on fiction for the Sunday magazine sections. (I think the Toronto STAR syndicates its stuff in that way.) To a lesser degree they would also be likely to pick up feature articles, if they had unusual or local interest. They might touch them up, to give them individual character, and take the reprint look off of them. It depends on the editor; some are lazy and others are not; the latter want to run original stuff only. (In this connection, writers should always specify when asked for permission, that their by-lines be retained. Some editors will delete the by-line to give the piece a staff-written appearance.)

Canadian editors often give American writers a crack at English markets on a resale. I know of several authors who have been reprinted in this way. The pay is low, but it helps. It widens a writer's audience, too. A few of the small magazines and religious publications are also possible avenues for the second sale of material sold in Canada. The author who raised this question, pointed to certain American magazines that release the second rights on the stuff they buy. But because these magazines generally circulate in Canada, no first class book up there is interested in picking up the second rights.

All of this boils down to the fact that a writer can make many of these "plus" sales, if he has an alert agent, who is interested in the smaller sales. He cannot make so many of them himself. Unless he gradually builds up the know how through long experience. It has always seemed to me that the way to look at these sales is that they are nice if you can get them without too much trouble. But in the long run a writer will make more from writing new stories than trying to resell an old one too often.

There is always the danger that you anger an editor by reselling stuff he has bought. I have known writers who lost good columns, because they rewarmed the material too many times and too close to the home market. It is better to pass up a sale and keep the admiration of one editor than to sell several and be accused of a double cross. Think always in terms of the advantages to all parties involved. Don't be too mercenary.

REWRITE

THE WCS CENTRAL MS. MARKETS FILE

The WCS CENTRAL MS. MARKETS FILE attracted a lot of favorable attention at the Conference. It was announced that it was present the first day, and that it could be used at will. The result was that all through the ten days of the Conference one or two of the conferees could be seen in the room reserved for the WRITERS' BOOK CLUB display of writers' books. They were building up lists for their personal use, or digging out some specialized market for a particular ms. In many cases Bill or Elva discussed markets & offered advice out of their wide experience. Considered as a whole, this is one feature, that no other Conference offers.

This year just before the Conference began we were able to improve the File considerably with some last minute additions of specialized categories. These are often duplicated reference to certain markets, but they make the file much more useful, because a single magazine or newspaper can then be found under several headings, and so can be examined for its fiction, article, filler or perhaps poetry requirements.

One of the most important of these recent additions was a category entirely given over to the feature article. Arranged in alphabetical order are magazines of every type & interest. A long list of feature markets in The WRITER Magazine proved very helpful. It gave us an opportunity to set up this category quickly in time for the Conference. But it has now been enlarged by many references gathered from our own research and that WCS Family members have made, as well as clippings from numerous other sources.

And so the File grows, adding momentum to its ability to serve writers every month or even day. It is becoming encyclopaedic, the best all around and most accurate source of market information that is standing by, and able to give writers individual and personalized service day by day. So far as know, a similar service is given only by the NWC or in a less personalized manner by the Authors' League of America.

THIS WILL AFFECT YOU!

The Authors' League of America has urged, very wisely, I think, all of its members to endorse Sen. Irving M. Ives' (N.Y.) Amendment to the Internal Revenue Act of 1951. Intent of this is to let writers postpone the payment of part of their income tax by investing up to 10% of their net income or \$7,500 whichever is lesser, in a restricted fund organized by a professional group to which they belong. The purpose of this is to let writers invest part of their earnings in an annuity that would be taxable under the laws governing annuities rather than as straight income.

Writers should urge their representatives to support this amendment and tell Sen. Ives

that they welcome his good work in their behalf. In our September issue we pointed out how the small self-employed person is being squeezed by the proposed taxes on income and the increased postal rates, together with the now existing tax for social security. The Senate Finance Committee, following the urgent representations of the Authors' League of America, Mystery Writers of America, the National Writers' Club, and REWRITE, the only writers' magazine to take cognizance of, and constructive action in, this vitally important matter, voted down the idea of withholding 20% of a writer's earned or invested income. This form of tax, however, still remains part of the House's concurrent tax-legislation. It could easily be incorporated into the final tax bill either on the floor of the Senate or in the Conference Committee. It should obviously be protested vigorously by every writer until it is a dead dog.

Beware of Generalizations

One of our friends in the WCS Family made reference recently to one of those clever & not altogether accurate half-truths capable of tripping up the unwary or unthinking. It states that the difference between the professional and amateur writer is that a professional can write no matter what the conditions are, while an amateur remains unable to write no matter what the conditions are.

I personally never like to judge writers, or anyone else on such a basis. For it puts the person judged in a type group, allowing no room for the effect of individual integrity and character. Moreover, it seems to me that if we are aware of these generalizations which serve as rough rules of thumb, in ordinary circumstances we should be able to do something about them.

Every so often we run into a writer whose attitude seems to be that we are criticizing his or her ms. personally and making nasty insinuations not against the ms. but against the author. That is, of course, ridiculous. We are on the side of the author every time. But unless we view the ms. and the author's problem objectively and from every angle, it is foolish for us to think that we can give practical or realistic help. Editors do not yet accept a ms. just because we wrap it up in a pink ribbon, or give the author "E" for a nice effort.

So, I want to feel that if I see a reason why the author does not sell, which may lie in the writer's character or approach, I like to feel that I can tell him or her what the trouble is. And expect that he or she plans to attack the defect at its core. For I believe firmly that most such troubles can be eliminated, if we think them through & then work out ways and means of "improving" one's "property". And that is one of the sides of living that is fun.

That's why I avoid half-truths, seek truth.

REWRITE

A POETRY MAGAZINE & SOME IDEAS

The COUNTRY POET, Edwin P. Gesuque, Sanbornville, N. H., appeared last summer as a quarterly. It is devoted to poetry of "farm and field and stream". Its publisher dreams of having it appear more frequently. In the fall, neatly mimeographed letters sent to poets on July 25th and Sept. 15th, he offered some plain talk.

He wishes The COUNTRY POET to be a paying market. He plans to pay by royalty, divided equally among the contributors. A minimum of 750 copies have to be sold before the basic expenses are met. This does not include any compensation to the staff or authors. Even rent, overhead and return on capital aren't included. Less than 200 copies of an original print run of 500 copies were sold, when the Summer issue appeared. Yet Mr. Gesuque, a rather optimistic man apparently, is planning a run of 750 copies for the Autumn copy (Oct. 1) and is scheduling the Winter issue and subsequent ones for at least a year. He hopes for a circulation of 1,000 at \$1.00 a year.

We have reproduced these figures, because we believe that most poets have no idea the cost of maintaining even a non-paying book, is so high or the circulation so small. We have not yet seen a copy of this magazine & so, are not familiar with the background of the publisher. However, we like his realistic facing of his problems, and yours. It's our opinion that if poets would face up to, and struggle against the realities of present day publishing with as much hard boiled objectiveness, there would be fewer "vanity presses" and more poetry magazines able and willing to pay poets a decent fee for using their verses. In the final analysis, as every poetry editor in the country can clearly prove to you, the reason that there are so few paying magazine markets for poetry, is—that the majority of verse writers in America, and, I guess, elsewhere, too, just are not willing to support their markets with a subscription, or get their friends to help.

The marking of Poetry Day, or even Weeks, throughout this country during this month is a step in the right direction. But until poets stop considering it their inalienable & natural right to have someone else lose money publishing their poems; until poets stop pouring money down the drain to satisfy the vanity of having often worthless verse published between hard covers, while their real friends and severest critics lose money publishing limited circulation magazines, there will be no paying market for poetry. Poets need to get out and fill everyone with their own love of poetry. (If they allow "vanity" printers to suck them in, I, for one, believe they love their own egos more than they love Poetry!) REWRITE has consistently fought to help writers think straight and stand by any editor, who has their best interests firmly in mind. We do not seek to disparage anyone

sincerely attempting to be creative and cooperative in the great business of living a full and more abundant life. (That is—God's teaching, the philosophy Christ died upon a cross to express his belief in. He loved all mankind, even those who seek to prey upon & deceive their fellows.) It is part of our desire to bring writers and editors close together for mutual profit and better, more objective understanding of each other's problems. We will, however, continue to report, explain and defend the truth as we see it.. And that is why we, like many a poetry publisher, lose money on REWRITE, and prefer to refuse all advertising notwithstanding.

The COUNTRY POET states it seeks poetry of the general character described above. The staff, Mr. Gesuque states, plans a layout & then tries to fill that in with "so much of one kind of verse, so much of another, etc." That sounds like a business-like policy. We are anxious to examine a copy.

Vanity Publishing. A non-advertising literary agent reports that she, and, she thinks, other agents, has been circularized, by one of the vanity presses that regularly advertises in certain writers' magazines. This firm sometime ago announced a "trade" dept. for the publication of books on a "straight royalty" basis. (This separation of interests is not referred to in recent ads.) REWRITE welcomes, as this page implies, any practical new market for writers' products. However, we believe that the dictum of the editor of the O. Henry Prize Stories, Herschel Brickell, is a true one. The "imprint value" is all important, especially to the young & unknown writer, who is breaking in. Therefore, we believe that the reputation of vanity publishing is hard to live down, & that in any such case as this, a new management, if it were to take over an old imprint, would be much wiser to create its own original imprint. In other words, to start from nothing and not allow the stigma of vanity publishing ever to become associated with its personal imprint. The same advice goes for authors. (We had an author commend us for our recent article on "vanity publishing". This author claimed to be publishing his own ms. But the imprint on his books is that of a vanity press, and almost every reputable critic in the country recognizes it as such.)

Cooperative Selling. We have studied literature from an untitled organization which undertakes to sell the work of its members, and if it cannot, to publish some of them—regardless. The writer who wishes to investigate this proposition, pays a sizable down payment, which is not returnable, and if he is "accepted", a much larger sum each year. The proposition is based on two false premises: (1) that individual commercial publications have groups of writers that keep it going; and (2) that being seen in print will sell an unknown writer whether he is ready, or not. Both assumptions are ridiculous. We strongly advise against such an investment.